

## Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

NEA-10 DRC-01 /126 W  
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R 161648Z NOV 73  
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 561  
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
AMCON CASABLANCA  
AMCONSUL TANGIER  
COMNAVTRACOM  
COMNAVSTA  
USCINCEUR  
USINT ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 4999

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT MO

SUBJ: IMPACT OF SECRETARY'S VISIT TO RABAT

1. WITH TEN DAYS PASSED SINCE SECRETARY'S STAY IN RABAT, IT IS POSSIBLE MAKE SOME ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT VISIT HAS HAD ON OUR RELATIONS WITH THIS COUNTRY. FIRST POINT TO BE MADE IS THAT KING WAS OBVIOUSLY DELIGHTED TO HAVE MOROCCO INCLUDED ON SECRETARY'S ITINERARY, AND GOM WAS INSTRUCTED TO MAKE HIS SATISFACTION KNOWN. FROM INVITATION TO STAY AT ROYAL GUEST VILLA TO SETTING UP OF SPECIAL DIRECT TELEPHONE LINE TO US, EVERY EFFORT WAS MADE TO SHOW THAT VISIT WAS VERY SPECIAL OCCASION IN MOROCCAN EYES. MORE IMPORTANT, KING WISHED SECRETARY TO HAVE EASY ACCESS TO HIM, AND HIS GESTURE IN WALKING SECRETARY BACK TO GUEST VILLA AT 12:30 A.M. AFTER FIRST MEETING WAS NOT ORDINARILY MADE TO FOREIGN MINISTERS.

2. KING CLEARLY WAS REASSURED BY VISIT AND IS USING IT TO ENHANCE  
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HIS CREDIBILITY AS MAJOR ARAB STATESMAN. HE VALUES RELATINSHIP

WITH US, PARTICULARLY GIVEN POOR STATE OF HIS RELATIONS WITH MAGHREB NEIGHBORS, AND CLEARLY SEIZED ON VISIT AS OCCASION FOR MAKING UP WITH US AFTER STRAINS OF MIDDLE EAST WAR. AT SAME TIME, HE ANXIOUS THAT HIS ARAB BROTHERS, SOME OF WHOM HAVE TENDED TO REGARD LIGHTLY HIS CONTRIBUTION TO WAR EFFORT, NOT FORGET HIS LONG-STANDING AMERICAN CONNECTION. FOREIGN MINISTER BENHIMA HAS MADE POINT OF THIS CONNECTION DURING HIS JUST COMPLETED TOUR OF ARAB CAPITALS. KING'S ARAB WORLD CREDENTIALS NEED BOOST PARTICULARLY NOW THAT HIS CALL FOR ARAB FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTER'S CONFERENCE HAS BEEN UPSTAGED BY SADAT AND ASAD'S REPORTED ACCEPTANCE OF BOUMEDIENE'S ALGIERS SUMMIT PROPOSAL.

3. FROM GOM POINT OF VIEW, VISIT WAS VERY USEFUL GESTURE OF POLITICAL SUPPORT ON LOCAL AS WELL AS ON INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. LOCAL ADMIRATION FOR SECRETARY'S DIPLOMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIS FLATTERING VISIT TO RABAT HAVE GENERATED GOOD DEAL OF LOCAL OPTIMISM RE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST AND HAVE HELPED KING'S POSITION INTERNALLY BY DRAWING ATTENTION TO ROLE HE IS PLAYING SETTLEMENT EFFORTS.

4. IN ADDITION, VISIT HAS UNDOUBTEDLY HAD A GOOD EFFECT ON US-MOROCCAN RELATIONS. AS WE HAVE REPORTED (RABAT 4916 AND 4978, BOTH USIAC), PRO-GOVERNMENT PRESS HAS SWITCHED FROM HOSTILITY TO OUR ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST TO GENERALLY FAVORABLE STANCE, AND TONE OF OPPOSITION PAPERS, WHICH HAD BEEN VIRULENTLY HOSTILE, HAS BECOME FOR MOST PART NEUTRAL, THOUGH SOME EDITORIAL CRITICISM CONTINUES. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN MARKED CHANGE IN ATTITUDE OF MOROCCAN MEDIA TOWARDS OUR INFORMATION PROGRAM. WHEREAS PRIOR TO VISIT, PRESS, RADIO, AND TV WERE SKEPTICAL AND RELUCTANT TO USE OUR MATERIAL, THEY NOW ARE ACTIVELY REQUESTING AS MUCH AS WE CAN SUPPLY THEM, INCLUDING NOT SIMPLY NEWS RELEASES AND STATEMENTS, BUT BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON US AND ITS RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO. IN PERSONAL CONTACTS, WHICH MUCH EASIER NOW THAN THEY WERE THREE WEEKS AGO, MOROCCAN OFFICIALS AND PRO-GOVERNMENT JOURNALISTS EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO SECRETARY'S VISIT (ONE HAS CHARACTERIZED IT AS MOST IMPORTANT SINCE ROOSEVELT'S TO CASABLANCA IN 1943), AND TO RELATIONS WITH US IN GENERAL. THEY REGARD SECRETARY'S VISIT, AND FOLLOW-UP BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM, AS EVIDENCE OF RENEWED US INTEREST IN THIS COUNTRY. IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE TODAY THAT WE WERE IN STANDFAST PHASE

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OF OUR E&E PLAN ONLY A MONTH AGO.

5. THIS CHANGE IN CLIMATE DRAMATIC AND MOST WELCOME, BUT WE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THAT THINGS WILL NECESSARILY CONTINUE AS THEY ARE NOW. LOCAL ATTITUDES WILL BE KEYED TO PROGRESS TOWARD MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT AND TO EVIDENCE OF US SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO. WE HAVE COME TO ENCOURAGING NEW PHASE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO AND WITH REST OF ARAB WORLD. WE SINCERELY HOPE

MOMENTUM CAN BE MAINTAINED.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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